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2099
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THE PUNISHER
2099 A.D.
THE RETURN OF
VENDETTA
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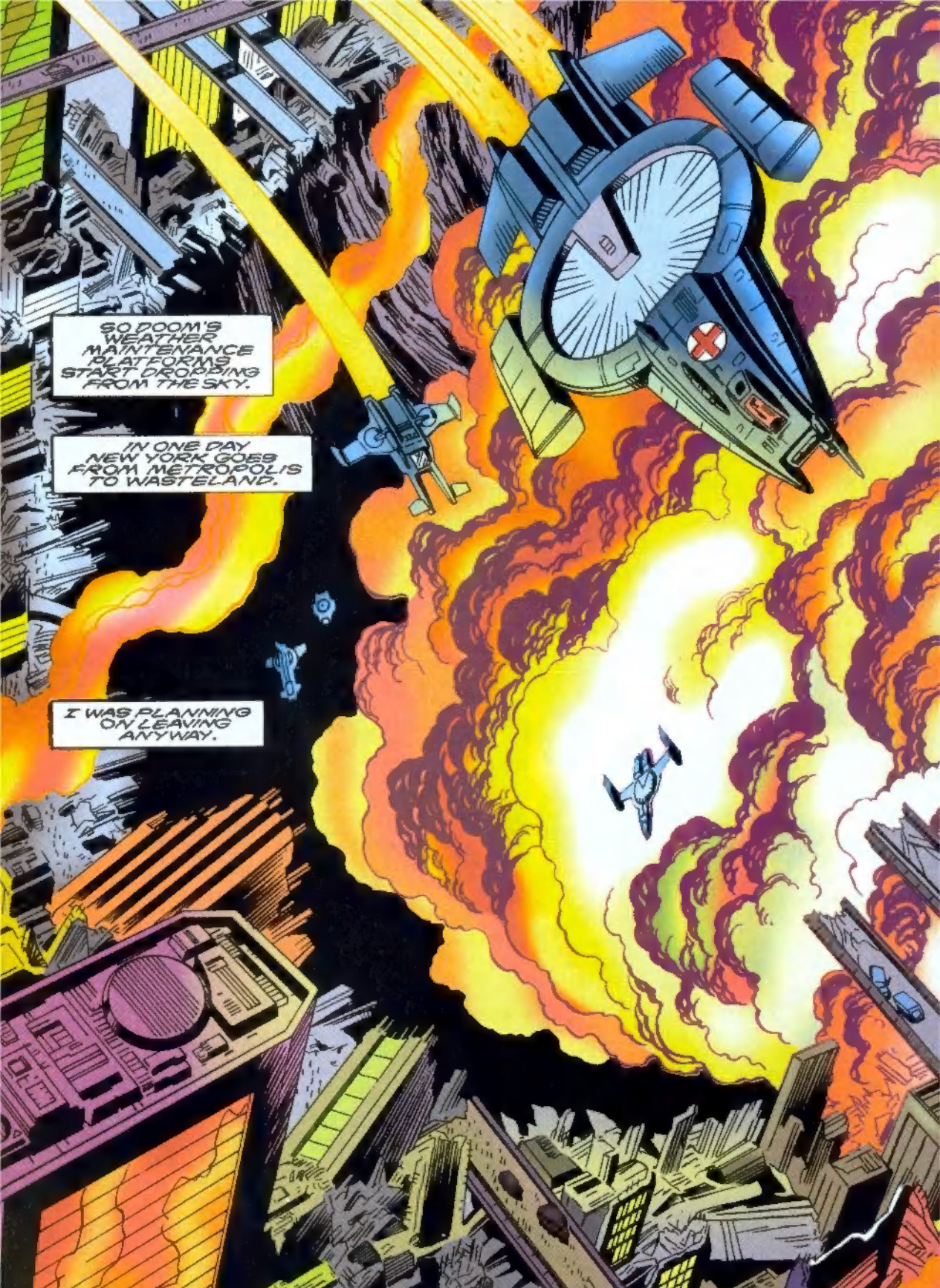
SO DOOM'S WEATHER MAINTENANCE PLATFORMS START DROPPING FROM THE SKY.
IN ONE DAY NEW YORK GOES FROM METROPOLIS TO WASTELAND.
I WAS PLANNING ON LEAVING ANYWAY.

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THE
BLUE STAR

THE END OF CIVILIZATION AND ALL THAT NOISE.
NO ONE'S IN CHARGE. IT'S JUST ANIMAL SURVIVAL NOW.
FOLKS PICKING UP AND HEADING OUT OF THE CITY TO SEE IF IT'S BETTER OVER THE NEXT HILL.
GET THIS BUCKET MOVING, AXEL. OUR LAUNCH WINDOW IS TIGHT.
YOU WANT ME TO RELINE THROUGH ALL THIS AIR TRAFFIC? YOU'RE AS CRAZY AS GALLOWS, LADY!
U-HAUL
7
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THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THIS WILL WORK. THE LAUNCHPORTS WILL BE JAMMED, WONG.
I'M BETTING MY SHIELD CLEARANCE STILL CARRIES SOME WEIGHT.
YOU FLASH A SHIELD BUZZER AND YOU'RE LIABLE TO GET US KILLED. IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED NOBODY'S INTO AUTHORITY FIGURES RIGHT NOW.
SHUT UP AND DRIVE.
SO IT'S CHAOS. THEN WE JUST HAVE TO GET MORE PUSHY.
I CAN SEE WHY HE LIKES YOU, WONG.
THIS ISN'T ABOUT "LIKE".
I SWORE LOYALTY TO HIM AND WHAT HE STANDS FOR.
AND I'LL KEEP MY WORD EVEN IF NONE OF THAT EXISTS ANYMORE.
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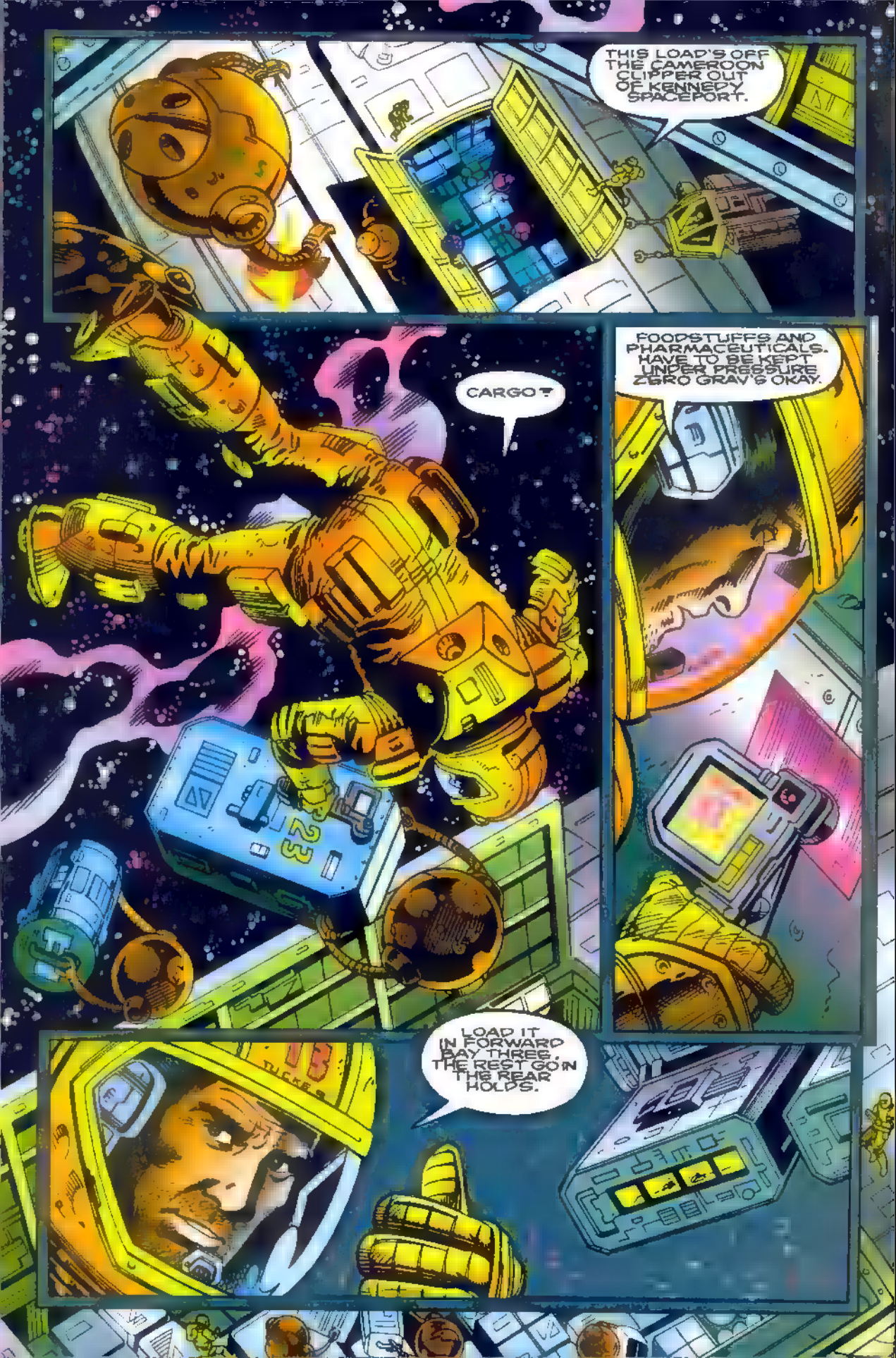
LOOK AT THEM. THE PRIVILEGED AND WELL-CONNECTED. RUNNING FROM THE MESS THEY CREATED.
YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE TO BLAME, AXEL?
DOOM SET THIS WHOLE NIGHTMARE IN MOTION. AND NOW HIS ENEMIES ARE TURNING HIS "UTOPIA" ON ITS HEAD.
WHAT'S THAT OLD SAYING ABOUT A ROAD PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS?
I CAN'T BLAME ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO GET OFF PLANET RIGHT NOW.
SO SITUATIONAL ETHICS IS ANOTHER TRAIT YOU TWO HAVE IN COMMON, EH?
AXEL...
I KNOW... SHUT UP AND DRIVE.
THIS IS GOING TO BE SOME TRICK, IF WE CAN PULL IT OFF.
LAGUARDIA

THESE TEAMSTERS AREN'T EASY TO DEAL WITH ON A GOOD DAY.
AND THIS DOESN'T QUALIFY AS A GOOD DAY IN ANYONE'S BOOK.
61
7
70
STOP THE TRUCK AND STEP OUT WHERE WE CAN SEE YOU.
THIS IS A SHIELD PRIORITY ONE SHIPMENT. IT'S A VITAL DATABASE THAT MUST BE GOTTEN OFFWORLD FOR REASONS OF NATIONAL SEC--
BULL AND DOUBLE-BULL, WITCH. THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS NATIONAL SECURITY NO MORE.
THAT WENT DOWN THE VAC TUBES WITH DOOM.
TAKES JUICE TO GET SPACE IN A SHUTTLEHOLD, SWEET. WE'RE TAKIN' PRECIOUS METALS OR RIGHTEOUS STIMS.
OR MAYBE YOU GOT SOMETHING ELSE TO BARTER WITH?

HOW ABOUT A NEUTRON BATH, GOMER? IF THIS CONTAINER DOESN'T GET ORBITWARD I'M AS GOOD AS DEAD ANYWAY.
WHUP?
TAKE IT EASY, LADY...
FACE TOWARDS ENEMY
LOCAL 201
SHE'S BLUFFING.
TWO BILLION SUBATOMIC PARTICLES SAY I'M NOT.
JUST THINK OF ALL THOSE ITTY BITTY HOLES IN YOUR NASTY HIDE.
AKM
EVERYBODY LAY DOWN THEIR GUNS!
NOW!

MANIFEST IT FOR THE NEXT OFFWORLD LAUNCH.
23
BUT...
DO IT!
T-91

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?
I SAVED HIS LIFE.
YOU'VE UNLEASHED HIM ON THE UNIVERSE.
IT'S A BIG PLACE.


THIS LOAD'S OFF THE CAMEROON CLIPPER OUT OF KENNEDY SPACEPORT.
CARGO?
FOODSTUFFS AND PHARMACEUTICALS. HAVE TO BE KEPT UNDER PRESSURE. ZERO GRAV'S OKAY.
LOAD IT IN FORWARD BAY THREE, THE REST GO IN THE REAR HOLDS.

THAT'S TWO HUNDRED SLEEP CHAMBERS FULL. EACH ONE PAID OUT THREE MILLION STANDARD CREDITS.
ONE WAY TICKETS OFFPLANET, EVERYONE. THINGS MUST BE PRETTY DESPERATE EARTHSIDE.
DEATH ON A STICK. FROM THE FEW REPORTS I HEARD.
AND SWEET CHAOS ALL AROUND.
EASY ENOUGH TO BOGGLE THE MANIFESTS. WE LEAVE EARTHORBIT WITH A FULL LOAD OF SNOOZING PASSENGERS.
WE DOCK IN EUROPA STATION WITH A LOAD OF IRON ORE FROM THE BELTWAY.
VEGA
LIBERIA 171195
CARGO
SOUNDS LIKE PURE PROFIT TO ME.
WE'D BETTER PREPARE THE VEGA FOR INITIAL THRUST.
YEAH, WHILE WE STILL HAVE A LAUNCH WINDOW.

DIT!
INITIATING WAKE SEQUENCE...
TIME ELAPSED: FOUR STANDARD DAYS.
ESTIMATED POSITION: THREE STANDARD DAYS TRAVEL AT A SPEED OF-
KICK THE STATISTICS. GIVE ME EXTERIOR VITALS.
MIX. ABOVE LIVABLE
ANYBODY OUTSIDE THE CONTAINER?
OF SIGHT OF
VICINITY OF-
OPEN THE HATCH.

WHAT'S THE HURRY? IT'S A TWO MONTH PULLOUT TO EUROPA STATION.
CLECK DON'T WANT THESE SLAGGIN' CONTAINERS GOIN' INTO ANY MONITORED ORBITS.
WOULDN'T PAY TO HAVE THIS LITTLE SCAM ON THE VOX-NET.
THEN OPEN THE BAY DOORS AND EVAC 'EM.
NAW. WE AIRLOCK 'EM. PAY 'EM OUT SLOW SO THEY DON'T JUMBLE TOGETHER AND THROW A BLIP ON ANYONE'S SCANNERS.

PUNISHER?
WHO'S THE SKIPPER OF THIS BOAT?
HOLD IT RIGHT--
THERE.
GUY NAMED CLECK. IT'S AN INDEPENDENT RUN. OFF THE BOOKS.

WE GOT A STOWAWAY.
SOMEBODY GOT OUTTA A SLEEPPOD?
I DON'T CARE WHO THIS GUY IS, I WANT HIM ACED...
...NOW!
WE'RE BEING HAILED BY ANOTHER OUTFIT.
DOES IT LOOK LIKE I GOT TIME TO GAB WITH SOME OTHER SPACEJOCK?
YOU MIGHT WANT TO RESPOND TO THIS HAIL, SKIP.
GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON.
I'LL GIVE YOU TWO. THE HAIL IS A CHALLENGE AND THE CHALLENGER IS A BABE.

ANY SIGN OF THIS GUY?
DEWEY HERE. WE'RE CHECKING ENGINEERING.
CLECK SOUNDS STRESSED.
NO STRATEGY HERE. JUST HIT AND RUN. STAY ALIVE.
I COULD KILL THE ENTIRE CREW. THEN WHAT?
OH--

A HOT ROUND THROUGH A FUEL NACELLE.
I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING TO IMPROVE MY SITUATION.
HE SLAGGED MAIN CARGO.
THE FIRE CAN'T SPREAD WITHOUT AIR. SEAL OFF CARGO AND BLOW THE HOLDS.
WE HAVE CREWMEN IN THAT AREA. THEY'LL BLOW OUT INTO SPACE ALONG WITH THE ATMOSPHERE.
WE'LL PICK UP MORE CARGO JOCKB AT MARSPORT.
BLOW THE HATCHES.

TOO MUCH HEAT AND TOO MANY GUNS.
WHAT ELSE CAN GO WRONG?
THE CARGO BAY WILL BE OPENING TO VACUUM IN TWENTY SECONDS.
PLENTY.
TIME FOR A CHANGE OF PLANS.
SIXTEEN SECONDS.
SEVEN SECONDS.
SIX SECONDS.
FIVE...

HULL 457.7
SKIP, YOU GOTTA TALK TO THIS SLUT! SHE SOUNDS SERIOUS!
PUT ME THROUGH.
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, HONEY?
NO PROBLEM, SAILOR.
I'M OVER A THOUSAND KLICKS DISTANT AND I'M HAVING TROUBLE SCANNING YOU.
MY INITIAL SCANS READ YOU AS A HEAVY CARGOHAULER.
YEAH. INTERPLANETARY FREIGHT.
A CREW OF TWENTY OR SO?
GIVE OR TAKE. I GOT TIME FOR ONE MORE QUESTION, LADY.
ANY FEMALE CREW MEMBERS?
NOT A ONE, BABE. YOU GOT A PROPOSITION MAYBE?
NOT ONE YOU'LL LIKE.

LOCK ON AND POWER UP.
AYE. AYE. VENDETTA.
NICE TOUCH, COMPUTER.
A FEW HOURS OF AIR.
LUCKY FOR ME THE SUIT'S UP TO SPECS.

I CAN USE MY PULSE GUN AS A SHORT BURST RETRO TO AIM ME BACK TOWARD THE CARGOSHIP.
I CAN FIND ANOTHER LOCK AND GET BACK INSIDE.
THEN WE START ALL OVER AGAIN.
ONLY WAY OUT OF THIS IS TO GET TO THE BRIDGE AND TAKE CONTROL.
GET MYSELF TO AN OUTLAW PORT.
uh?

TWO HOURS OF AIR.
FOUR DAYS TRAVEL AT FULL POWER FROM THE NEAREST OXYGEN.
AND THERE GOES MY RIDE.
TO BE CONTINUED!